



# Montgomery County Council

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*From the Office of Councilmember Phil Andrews*

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March 1, 2013

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## **Councilmember Phil Andrews to Speak at Montgomery 'Choose Respect' Program**

*Fun Event for Students in Grades 6-12 on Sunday, March 3,  
Also Focuses on Serious Side of Abusive Teen Relationships*

ROCKVILLE, Md., March 1, 2013—Montgomery County Councilmember Phil Andrews, who chairs the Council's Public Safety Committee and the County's Domestic Violence Coordinating Council, will be among the speakers Sunday, March 3, as the "Montgomery Choose Respect" Program holds a fun and informative event for students Grades 6-12, their parents and youth service providers at the Germantown campus of Montgomery College. The event also will focus on the main aspect of the Choose Respect Program: Helping teens avoid abusive dating relationships.

The event will take place in Globe Hall from 1 to 4:30 p.m. Activities will be conducted in both English and Spanish. It is being held in conjunction with National Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Month. The event will include free pizza, snacks, drinks and music by the rock band Ivy Rose. Toby Knapp, a DJ from radio station Hot 99.5, and Jackie Benson, a reporter from NBC News4, will emcee the event.

The event will conclude with a raffle for teens. Recognition of the winners of the Choose Respect Montgomery Teen Dating Public Service Announcement Contest also will take place during the program closing.

More information about Sunday's event, including registration information, is available at: [www.chooserespectmontgomery.eventbrite.com](http://www.chooserespectmontgomery.eventbrite.com).

The Montgomery Choose Respect Program in 2012 received an award from the Maryland Community Crime Prevention Institute for its proactive measures. The four-year-old Choose Respect program is overseen by the Montgomery County Sheriff's

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Office and has been strongly supported by the County's Domestic Violence Coordinating Council.

Choose Respect is targeted toward County middle and high school students, but aims to get parents involved as well. A curriculum has been developed for the program, and when a school requests to participate, instructors from the program are sent to the school to discuss scenarios of dating. The curriculum is designed to help girls and boys avoid situations that could lead to abusive relationships. Although there are numerous programs to address domestic violence after it occurs, the Choose Respect program works to prevent those occurrences.

The special event is sponsored by the Domestic Violence Coordinating Council of Montgomery County, Verizon Wireless and Montgomery College. It has been organized in conjunction with several County agencies and organizations.

"The Choose Respect initiative is important to breaking the cycle of domestic violence, which often begins with abusive dating relationships," said Montgomery County Councilmember Phil Andrews, who chairs the County Council's Public Safety Committee and the Domestic Violence Coordinating Council. "This event recognizes the good work done in implementing this innovative program—and it will help many of today's teens be aware that help is available if they find themselves in one of these serious situations."

One in three teens in the U.S. is a victim of physical, sexual, emotional or verbal abuse from a dating partner—a number that far exceeds rates of other types of youth violence. Nearly 1.5 million high school students nationwide experience physical abuse from a dating partner in a single year.

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